

The Cloven Viscount: A Surrealist Masterpiece by Italo Calvino



The Cloven Viscount by Italo Calvino

★★★★☆ 4.6 out of 5

Language	: English
File size	: 923 KB
Text-to-Speech	: Enabled
Screen Reader	: Supported
Enhanced typesetting	: Enabled
Word Wise	: Enabled
Print length	: 106 pages
Lending	: Enabled
X-Ray	: Enabled



The Cloven Viscount is a surrealist novel by Italo Calvino that was first published in 1952. The novel tells the story of Medardo di Terralba, a young viscount who is split in two by a cannonball during a battle. The two halves of Medardo are then reunited, but they are no longer the same person. The left half of Medardo is rational and logical, while the right half is impulsive and passionate. This duality leads to a series of conflicts between the two halves of Medardo, as well as between Medardo and the rest of the world.

The Cloven Viscount is a complex and challenging novel, but it is also a rewarding one. Calvino's writing is both beautiful and thought-provoking, and he explores the themes of identity, duality, and the human condition with great insight and compassion. The novel has been praised by critics and readers alike, and it is considered one of Calvino's masterpieces.

Themes

The Cloven Viscount explores a number of themes, including:

- **Identity:** The novel raises questions about the nature of identity. What makes us who we are? Is our identity fixed, or can it change over time? Medardo's experience of being split in two forces him to confront these questions, and he ultimately comes to a new understanding of who he is.
- **Duality:** The novel also explores the theme of duality. Medardo's two halves are polar opposites, and they represent the two sides of human nature. The left half of Medardo is rational and logical, while the right half is impulsive and passionate. This duality is a source of conflict for Medardo, but it also allows him to see the world from different perspectives.
- **The human condition:** The Cloven Viscount is ultimately a novel about the human condition. Calvino explores the challenges that we all face in life, such as love, loss, and death. He also examines the ways in which we can overcome these challenges and find meaning in our lives.

Characters

The Cloven Viscount features a number of memorable characters, including:

- **Medardo di Terralba:** The protagonist of the novel, Medardo is a young viscount who is split in two by a cannonball. He is a complex and contradictory character, and he struggles to come to terms with his new reality.

- **Pamphilo:** Medardo's faithful servant, Pamphilo is the only person who knows about Medardo's condition. He is a loyal and compassionate friend, and he helps Medardo to come to terms with his new reality.
- **Ubalдина:** A young woman who falls in love with Medardo, Ubalдина is a symbol of hope and renewal. She helps Medardo to see the possibility of a new life, and she inspires him to find meaning in his existence.

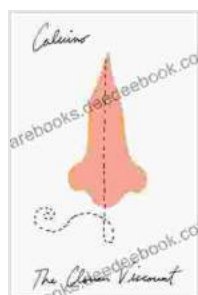
Style

The Cloven Viscount is written in a surrealist style. Surrealism is an artistic movement that emerged in the early 20th century. Surrealist artists sought to explore the unconscious mind and to create art that was free from the constraints of reason and logic. The Cloven Viscount is full of surreal images and events, and it often defies the laws of physics and reality. Calvino's use of surrealism helps to create a sense of disorientation and uncertainty, and it forces the reader to confront the irrational and illogical aspects of life.

Legacy

The Cloven Viscount has had a significant impact on literature and culture. The novel has been translated into more than 30 languages, and it has been adapted into a number of films and plays. The novel has also been praised by critics and readers alike, and it is considered one of Calvino's masterpieces. The Cloven Viscount is a challenging and rewarding novel that explores the complex and contradictory nature of human existence.

The Cloven Viscount is a masterpiece of surrealist literature. It is a complex and challenging novel, but it is also a rewarding one. Calvino's writing is both beautiful and thought-provoking, and he explores the themes of identity, duality, and the human condition with great insight and compassion.



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